

Having an Encounter with God

By Henry Blackaby

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... "Praying for a Change." Most of those in the Scriptures who had an encounter with God were immediately and forever changed. When we are in the presence of God, He brings about a radical change... Our primary purpose for coming into the house of God ought to be to have an encounter with God... transformational change.

Isaiah's Encounter with God

In Isaiah chapter six we see a remarkable encounter Isaiah had with God... Suddenly Isaiah was in the presence of the holiness of God. Some people talk about being in the presence of the holiness of God, and we sing about the holiness of God, and yet somehow we're not experiencing the holiness of God. If we got into the presence of the holiness of God I would guess that a number of us would have to respond with Isaiah: *"Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips"* (Isa. 6:5).

The presence and holiness of God always expose the specific need in your life that is keeping you from a deeper encounter with God... Something had to come from the altar of God and that is a life-transforming moment. Coals from off the altar touched his lips, and an amazing thing happened. When his lips were cleansed, his ears were opened... Isaiah heard God saying, *"Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?"*

Could that encounter happen to you? Do you suppose God has someone to whom He wants to send you... He has been trying to find someone who will hear Him say, *"Who will go for Us?"* ... Are you ready?

Praying for a Change in Our Nation

Are you "Praying for a Change???"... One person with passionate praying can turn a nation around! Why then is the nation not being turned around if we keep saying that we're praying?

... We don't need more praying as much as a qualitatively different relationship with God... Do you want to be the kind of person God could call on to pray because He knows the quality relationship you have to Him and that through your praying huge changes would take place in the nation and around the world?... What kind of changes need to be made in your life so that God could work profoundly through your life?

Moses' Prayer Life

...Moses stood between the sinning people and God, and pled for them, even asking God to take his name out of the book of life but to spare theirs. According to the Scriptures, the prayer life of Moses changed the heart of God.

...In Romans 8:26 Paul says one weakness we have is we do not know what to pray for as we ought... "Lord, I don't know what to pray as I ought!" What should I pray for my president? What should I pray for the upcoming elections? Our nation is being shattered. How then shall I pray? ... Will you passionately pray consistently until you know that God has heard and answered?

...Your prayer life and mine and your church's prayer life and mine can determine the course of history....

...An incredible breakdown has occurred in family life, in ethics in high places and in other unprecedented ways... God's people no longer believe that when they pray, God can and will powerfully affect the nation.

...Deuteronomy 9:8: "*You provoked the Lord to wrath....*" ...Do you know what happens when the people of God no longer have an intimate relationship with God? It provokes Him to anger, because God knows what is at stake eternally when His people do not function in a relationship to Him.

...If you are a spiritual leader of any kind, and if you are a parent you are one, remember God's people can provoke Him to anger where He would destroy us.

What is on the Heart of God?

...When was the last time you felt it was significant to know what was on the heart of God? What's on the heart of God for your children? What's on the heart of God for your church?...He warned the church in Revelation 2, "*You have left your first love.*" He was telling them that they no longer loved Him enough to gather together to pray...He would remove their candlestick.

...You cannot understand John 3:16 unless you understand the heart of God concerning one word in that verse, and that's the word "perish."

...John 3:16: "*...God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*" ...Second Peter 3:9 says, "*The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*"

God Raising Up People for Himself

...I (Henry Blackaby) have been granted the privilege by God to work with about 170 top Christian Chief Executive Officers (CEO's) of the Fortune 100 and Fortune 500 companies of America. These are most committed people. But these top executives have never been disciplined in... the ways of God... They have asked: "Would you help us to understand what Matthew 6:33 means to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and watch God add everything else?... Would you establish for us a spiritual leadership institute for developing spiritual statesmen for the corporate leadership of America?"

The Challenge:

...1 Samuel 2:35...*I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who shall do according to what is in My heart and in My mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever.*...How would we know if God is raising us up and how would we know what it is like to be raised up for Him? Are we willing to be His faithful priests?

...Billy Graham says, "The greatest untouched resource in America today is prayer."... God's people are the only ones who can fill that role.

...God's promises were to "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." How many generations does God want to touch when He touches one? He touched at least three.

Passionate, Persistent, Prolonged Prayer

...Prayer needs to be in the presence of God where He graciously tells you what is on His heart and what's on His mind.

...Little prayers will not do it. Passionate, persistent, prolonged prayer will.

...In Luke 18 Jesus said that we ought always to pray and never to quit.

...Surely in an hour like this, in the condition of our nation, and with elections coming up, and with the terrorists threatening to do harm to us, certainly God has something on His heart and on His mind that He wants some of His children to know so that when they go to pray, they pray from the heart of God and from the mind of God.

...He looks for someone who will come before Him in prayer so He can lay His heart over theirs in prayer.

...Once you know the truth of God, what you do next is what you believe about God. There is much at stake. What will you do?

(Full text available at www.heraldofhiscoming.com/Past%20Issues/2007/August)